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could not resist the temptation to whip off his outer garments and have a swim. A little thing like a roaring Numidian lion would not prevent him from crossing the moat.

Still, it's a poor idea that can't be made some use of. Why not try the most idea on that greatest of bear gardens, the Board of Estimate?

It Won't Be Smothered.

The Hyman administration is making a shocking spectacle of itself in the Town Hall affair. The investigation which was scheduled for Monday turned out to be no investigation at all, but an exhibition of animus and bad manners by HINSWORTH, the Commissioner of Accounts to whom the Mayor entrusted the job of finding out why the constitutional right of free speech was violated.

Just as a little clique from Police Headquarters prevented citizens of New York from speaking at the Town Hall, so HINSWORTH seems determined to prevent an orderly presentation of the facts about the outrage of November 13. His arrogant, overbearing conduct was such as to drive out of the case two such distinguished lawyers as PAUL D. CRAYATH and ROBERT MCC. MARSH. That perhaps is what HINSWORTH wanted to accomplish.

But does Mr. HYMAN nurse the delusion that fake investigations at Police Headquarters and rowdy performances by a person of the Hirschfield caliber will check public indignation over the Town Hall incident? If he does he has less shrewdness than most people give him credit for. There will be no peace until the instigators have been discovered and shamed.

Turnips and Revolutions.

It was not lack of able counsel or loyal support from the Hungarian people nor was it want of sufficient troops and competent officers that caused the inglorious failure of the Hapsburgs' attempted restoration to the throne of Hungary last autumn. It was turnips and beets. The former Empress ZITA explained this when she said that the end of October is the turnip and beet root harvest in Hungary and all the railroad cars were filled with them. "There were none left to carry us or our friends," she said. "That was the cause of our delay and our failure."

The little things are the things that count. Our old friend, guide and philosopher, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, reminds us that for want of a nail first a shoe, then a horse, next a rider and finally a kingdom were lost. The Scotch wear the thistle as a national emblem because barefoot Danish invaders treading upon a bed of these once despised plants cried out in pain and thus gave an alarm which saved the Scots from an unexpected attack and gave them a chance to gain a great victory over their enemies. The horse of WILLIAM III, stumbled over a mole hill and threw the king. He broke his collar bone, a severe illness ensued and he died in 1702. During the reign of Queen ANNE, his successor, the Jacobites acknowledged their indebtedness to the mole by making him, The Little Gentleman in Velvet, their favorite totem.

If CAESAR had read the parchment handed him by a friend he might not have gone to his death in the Roman Senate chamber. If HELEN had not eloped with PARIS there would have been no ten year Trojan war and no "Iliad" to conflict with the schoolboy's football duties. If the road had not been deep with mud NAPOLEON the aid he needed and Waterloo might not have been lost. "There is much virtue in it." We have SHAKESPEARE as an authority for it.

Since former royalty falls back upon turnips and beet roots to explain its failures and the great of the past were not above finding significance in the most trivial of things why cannot the rest of mankind indulge itself in that thoroughly legal and most human of defenses, an alibi? It may never be convincing to anybody else, but it is satisfying to its creator.

Graft on Mexican Railways.

If official estimates are to be accepted, approximately \$300,000,000 was siphoned from the Government controlled railroads of Mexico by graft in the last ten months. This applies only to the losses of the railroads themselves. It has nothing to do with the amounts extorted by employees in the way of blackmail levied upon shippers. The latter figures are not available, but they are supposed to be very large.

The authority for these statements is RAMON P. DE NEGRU, whom President OSMONDO last spring appointed as his personal representative on the administrative staff of the National Railways of Mexico. Mr. DE NEGRU found himself face to face with a house cleaning job of formidable proportions. He reports that in every department of the railroad service he found graft organized and widespread. He specifies some of the blackmailing methods applied to shippers.

If a shipper wanted to get a car of freight attached to a train he had to bribe the yardmaster, the switchmen and the switching engine crew. But this only got his car hitched to the train. If he wanted it to get to its destination and left there the engineer, fireman, conductor and all the brakemen of the train had to be paid. Otherwise the car vanished, to be heard from no more for weeks or maybe months and then, perhaps, to be found marooned on some remote siding. In the meantime the

car's contents were probably ruined or the shipper had lost his market.

It is not clear whether or not the officials higher in authority received a percentage of this graft; but it appears that they had their own sources of illegal income. These sources were varied and comprehensive. One of them was the farming out of cars and engines to large manufacturing and mining concerns. Another was the establishment of fast freight lines. Shipment by these lines cost 50 per cent. more than the regular railroad rates, but the goods reached their destination.

Of course to the successful operation of this system political pull was necessary, but in a government operated business political pull is always available. It is not necessary to go to Mexico to find that out.

Facts About Coal Costs.

The case of a Philadelphia householder who paid \$14.75 a ton for coal delivered in his cellar, although the coal sold at the mines a few miles away for \$1.75 a ton, was cited by JOHN L. LEWIS at the anthracite miners convention at Shamokin, Pennsylvania, last week, as proof that the present high cost of coal must be attributed to charges for transportation and middlemen's profits after the coal leaves the mines. But there is something decidedly wrong about the story.

Bituminous coal now costs \$2 a ton at the mines in central Pennsylvania and can be bought in Philadelphia and New York for a little above \$5 a ton. Bituminous coal brought all the way from the Welsh mines has actually sold within the last few weeks for \$5 a ton in American seaboard markets.

The Philadelphia coal paid \$14.75 for coal which cost only \$1.75 at the mines must have been grossly imposed upon, or else Mr. LEWIS made a mistake in the figures. If the wage element in the cost of coal were no larger than the proportion between \$1.75, assuming the total cost of the coal at the mine to represent wages, and the \$14.75 which was given by Mr. LEWIS as the retail price of coal delivered in the consumer's bin, then a cut of 30 per cent. or 50 per cent. or even 75 per cent. in the wages of miners would have only a slight effect on the cost to the consumer. But the ratio of wages to selling prices is much larger. J. D. A. MORGAN, representing bituminous operators at the freight rate hearing last week, told the Interstate Commerce Commission that wages constituted 67.8 per cent. of the cost of coal production. The average production cost of bituminous is \$2.13 a ton. The average wage cost a ton is therefore \$1.44.

The average retail price of bituminous coal now is about \$5 a ton, and the miner's wage represents just about 30 per cent. of this selling price, and not 11 per cent., as Mr. LEWIS contended. Furthermore, on this ton of coal selling for \$5 the freight averages \$2.27, and here again wages are by far the larger part of the cost of freight transportation.